

## Agenda Item 5



### Budget Scrutiny 2024 – Draft recommendations from Budget Scrutiny Inquiry Group v.5

Chairman – Cllr Ralph Bagge

#### Response from Cabinet

Recommendation	Cabinet's Response – Y/N & comments	Lead Member/Officer & Timelines
<p>1. The Capital element of the MTFP should be presented with an additional section containing an outline of projects that are realistic but do not yet have a finalized business case and funding agreed to give Members and residents a clearer understanding of the long-term ambition for the capital investment programme. (Members note that similar recommendations have been made in 2020, 2021 and 2023).</p>	<p>Not agreed.</p> <p>The purpose of the medium term financial plan is to set out how the Council is deploying its resources. The capital element of the MTFP therefore only includes those schemes which are to be delivered by the Council within the resources that are available. Whilst there are many schemes that the Council would like to deliver, setting out a list of potential projects that are not currently funded would raise expectations that we may not be able to fulfil. As agreed in response to the recommendation in 2023, the capital element of the MTFP will make clear which of the projects in the capital programme have an agreed business case, and which still require a business case to be approved before the allocated funding can be released. This will provide greater clarity about the status of projects in the programme.</p>	<p>Cllr Martin Tett</p> <p>David Skinner</p>
<p>2. The Council must consider proactive intervention in the Home to School Transport market for instance through</p>	<p>Agreed in part.</p>	<p>Cllr Steve Broadbent</p>

<p>capital investment in a pilot-fleet to address escalating service costs. This would be a significant indicator to the market that the Council is willing to challenge the current market rate by delivering a proof of concept.</p>	<p>There is an established Client Transport Improvement Programme in place for home to school transport which includes a number of key projects and interventions which are key to effectively managing the growth the Service is experiencing and forecasting. This includes the review of our long-term procurement strategy and implementing a new 'Dynamic Purchasing System' (DPS) to deliver a long term tendering strategy, which will include new contractual terms and conditions to further stimulate increased market competition.</p> <p>Significant work has already been carried out to consider the viability of the provision of an in-house transport fleet. This work has shown that once the significant set up and management costs of an in-house service are considered along with the likely utilisation levels of the fleet and 'down time', the financial savings that could be directly achieved are limited. This option will remain open for further review but in the meantime resources are being directed towards projects where savings are considered more likely to be achievable. More information on the CTIB programme and priority projects to deliver savings was recently reported to the Transport, Environment and Climate Change Select Committee. The full report from the meeting can be accessed <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p>Richard Barker</p>
<p>3. The Finance &amp; Resources Select Committee should receive an in-depth confidential report on Home to School Transport costs which also includes information on the growth model.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>A confidential report on Home to School Transport costs and growth model will be provided to the Finance and Resources Select Committee in the first quarter of 24/25.</p>	<p>Cllr Steve Broadbent</p> <p>Richard Barker</p>

<p>4. In light of historic and ongoing concerns raised by the Audit &amp; Governance Committee, the financial management model and/or the adverse financial position of Farnham Park Trust must be resolved in 2024-25 in conjunction with the delivery of the Leisure Strategy.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Work is underway to develop recommendations to address the specific issues relating to the ongoing financial sustainability of Farnham Park Trust and report back to the Audit and Governance Committee in Q1 2024/25. The wider Leisure Strategy will be brought forward for consultation and adoption in 2024/25.</p>	<p>Cllr Clive Harriss</p> <p>Richard Barker</p>
<p>5. The Finance &amp; Resources Select Committee should receive a report on the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit and the Delivering Better Value programme in 2024 year once figures have been finalized following year-end.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>A date will be scheduled for a report to Scrutiny in the new financial year.</p>	<p>Cllr Anita Cranmer</p> <p>John Macilwraith</p>